

## MCH Training Program 2006-2007 Strategic Planning Workgroups Interdisciplinary Workgroup Teleconference - August 23, 2006

### Summary Notes

#### Participants

*Workgroup Members:* Dalice Hertzberg, Jean Ivey, Penny Leggott, Sandy Lobar, John McLaughlin, Donald Oswald, Bruce Shapiro, Bonnie Spear, and Sally Steward. *MCHB:* Laura Kavanagh, Nanette Pepper, and Denise Sofka. *MCH TRC:* Judith Gallagher and Sheryl Mathis.

**Questions/Clarifications on July Conference Call Summary Notes:** A question was raised clarifying whether the workgroup would focus on interdisciplinary practice or interdisciplinary training. It was agreed that these are very different, but interrelated things. In order to train people to practice in an interdisciplinary fashion, we need to know what characterizes interdisciplinary practice. The focus of this workgroup is on the process - what does the Training Program need to provide so that students leave the programs able to practice in an interdisciplinary fashion? It was also agreed that a more accurate title for the workgroup would be Interdisciplinary Training and Practice.

#### Gathering Expert Advice from the Field on Guidance for New Interdisciplinary Research Grant

*Background from MCHB on Development of New Grant:* The need for targeted research on MCH-focused interdisciplinary training was raised as an issue at a past Joint (grantee) Meeting. Past research on interdisciplinary training is primarily from the field of geriatrics. Subsequently, Ann Drum committed to set aside one MCH Research Grant focused on Interdisciplinary Practice and/or Interdisciplinary Training. The purpose of the targeted research grant is to get a better handle on the outcome the Training Program is promoting through interdisciplinary training and identify aspects of interdisciplinary training that are effective in facilitating interdisciplinary practice.

*MCHB is seeking expert advice from workgroup members on...*

- What research questions should this project attempt to answer?
- What are the gaps in knowledge?
- What information would be useful for grantees to have?
- What specific methodological approaches should be considered?

*Areas for research focus as suggested by Workgroup Members*

- What works for trainees post-training in terms of interdisciplinary practice in the field?
- How do we know what is effective in helping trainees practice in an interdisciplinary way in the real world?
- What aspects of the Interdisciplinary Training were most effective for trainees?
- What are the core elements of interdisciplinary practice across disciplines and practice settings?

- How do we quantify differences in interdisciplinary skills utilized at 1 year post-training versus 5-years and 10-years post-training?

*Other suggestions and discussion points:*

- Research projects should be cognizant of confusion between interdisciplinary versus transdisciplinary
- Lessons may be learned from how other disciplines operationalize interdisciplinary practice-- what does a business model for interdisciplinary practice look like as opposed to a public health or medical model?
- Caution should be taken not to place too many limitations or restrictions on the focus of the research grants

## Key Points in Workgroup Members' Discussion of Draft Workplan

*Priority Activity 1: Develop guidance for research projects that address the effectiveness of MCH interdisciplinary training*

- Workgroup members will give further thought to the key research questions and other aspects of the research project guidance on which they might provide expert advice. Any additional comments and suggestions related to the research projects can be forwarded directly to Laura Kavanagh (lkavanagh@hrsa.gov).

*Priority Activity 2: Define Interdisciplinary Practice (In order to determine how the program can best train fellows to facilitate interdisciplinary practice, we must have a clear definition of "interdisciplinary practice.")*

*Areas workgroup members feel we need to consider as part of this priority task...*

- Identifying skills and knowledge trainees need in order to practice in an interdisciplinary way in a variety of settings.
- What is it about interdisciplinary training that produces a leader in interdisciplinary practice?
- Identify core elements needed in key areas of training (e.g., didactic and clinical training)
- A starting point may be to identify what operational definitions are being utilized in the field and among workgroup members' programs and other training programs. Workgroup members agreed to investigate the operational definition of interdisciplinary practice used at their institution/program and share these definitions via email with the MCH Training Resource Center.

*Priority Activity 3: Identify mechanisms to assess effectiveness of interdisciplinary training including the impact on quality and cost benefit of the approach.*

- Workgroup members agreed that work should be initiated on Priority Activity 2 first to help inform work on Priority Activity 3.

## Other Discussion Items

AUCD conducted a survey to ask practitioners what is interdisciplinary practice, identify barriers to interdisciplinary practice and the cost effectiveness of interdisciplinary practice in the real world. This information may be useful for the workgroup members to review.

## Next Steps

- Workgroup members will forward additional comments and suggestions on the research grant to Laura Kavanagh.
- Workgroup members will identify operational definitions of interdisciplinary practice used by their program/institution and forward these to Sheryl Mathis (smathis@hsrnet.com).
- MCH Training Resource Center will compile the definitions, identify themes and share these with the workgroup members.
- The **next workgroup meeting** will take place on Wednesday September 27, 2006 at 3:30 p.m. EDT. During this call the group will talk about on-going methods of communication and scheduling of subsequent conference calls. Alternate information sharing mechanisms like a listserv or threaded email discussion will also be considered.